News release

Dry spell continues

2 February 2006

England and Wales have had the driest January for almost a decade, and some parts of the UK have had less than a third of their average rainfall so far this year, according to Met Office figures released today.

In total England and Wales had 33.2 mm of rain throughout the month – 37% of the long-term average – making it the driest January since 1997 and the sixth driest on record.

Many areas had less than half their average January rainfall.

- The Midlands and East Anglia had only 31% of their average monthly rainfall – 22.4 mm and 15.7 mm respectively
- South-east and central southern England had 24.8 mm of rain, 32% of the long-term average
- South-west England and southern Wales had 44.5 mm, 33% of the long-term average
- Eastern and north-east England had 29.4 mm, 42% of the long-term average.

2005 in south-east and central southern England was the fourth driest on record and the driest year since 1973.

Since November 2004, 13 out of the last 15 months have recorded below 1961-1990 average rainfall for South-east and central-southern England, with the worst affected areas being Hampshire, Sussex, Surrey, Middlesex and Kent, which have received around 70% of their normal rainfall.

More detail about the dry spell

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